

AGENDA ITEM XI-D

Report on the State Science and Engineering Fair

RECOMMENDATION: No action required

Goal(s): Participation, Success

The Science Fair helps carry out the strategy of recruiting and preparing students for success in undergraduate majors and baccalaureate programs in the critical areas of science, mathematics, and engineering.

Background:

The Texas State Science and Engineering Fair (TSSEF) has been in operation for several decades through the leadership and voluntary efforts of a number of scientists and science educators around the state. House Bill 3028, which was passed by the 77th Texas Legislature, designated the Coordinating Board as the official state agency sponsor for the annual State Science and Engineering Fair as part of an outreach program for middle school, junior high school, and high school students.

In April 2002 the Board adopted final rules for the organization and operation of the state fair, as required by legislation. The TSSEF complies with the rules of the International Science and Engineering Fair and its publication, *International Rules for Precollege Research: Guidelines for Science and Engineering Fairs*.

Report:

The 2004 Texas State Science and Engineering Fair was held on April 1-3, and was hosted by Texas Tech University at the United Spirit Arena. Dr. Bruce Whittlesey, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Texas Tech, and Dr. Jo Temple of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Texas Tech, served as Co-Directors of this year's TSSEF. The Fair hosted over 900 secondary school students who competed for prizes and awards in the categories of behavioral sciences, biochemistry, botany, chemistry, computer science, earth and space science, engineering, environmental sciences, gerontology, mathematics, medicine and health, microbiology, physics, and zoology.

Up to \$200,000 in scholarships to attend Texas colleges and universities are provided by the sponsors of the Fair. These scholarships and other prizes are distributed to students during the awards ceremonies, much to the delight of students and their parents. This year's sponsors include Exxon Mobil (the title sponsor for the fourth year in a row), Kellogg Brown & Root, Texas Workforce Commission, The University of Texas at Arlington, Texas Tech University, and the Coordinating Board. The purpose of the TSSEF is to promote an appreciation for and interest in science, mathematics, and engineering among precollege students; to assist schools and school districts in fulfilling their mission in science and mathematics education; and to promote workforce development in the fields of science,

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mathematics, and engineering by providing students with an opportunity to interact with higher education and corporate institutions.

A complete listing of award winners in all categories is available on the website of Texas Tech University at www.depts.ttu.edu/statesciencefair/. Gloria White, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, will be available to answer questions.